

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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COMMITTEE ON GENERAL AFFAIRS
May 17, 2005
CONFIRMATION HEARING

The Committee on General Affairs met at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17, 2005, in Room 1510 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on confirmation of appointee. Senators present: Ray Janssen, Chairperson; Deb Fischer, Vice Chairperson; Matt Connealy; Mike Friend; and David Landis. Senators absent: Abbie Cornett; Philip Erdman; and Roger Wehrbein.

SENATOR JANSSEN: ...confirm the gubernatorial appointment of Robert Logsdon, to the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission. Members of the committee present here this morning, to my left, Senator Connealy; way to my extreme right is Senator Landis; and next to his left is Senator Fischer; and to her left is Senator Friend. The committee counsel is Laurie Lage; and the clerk is Brittany Sill; and our page is Audrey. With that, Mr. Logsdon, will you please take front and center.

CONFIRMATION HEARING ON
ROBERT LOGSDON TO THE
NEBRASKA LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION

ROBERT LOGSDON: Chairman Janssen, Senators, I've just finished six years on the commission. I think I've been good for the commission and I would like to continue working for you people in the state of Nebraska.

SENATOR JANSSEN: All right. Are there any questions?

SENATOR LANDIS: I see in your list of references, Bob, not a felon, but certainly, but a sordid history in the past that I think is a little embarrassing; that's Frank Landis, here. But other than that, I think it's a sparkling record, and I'm sure many of us have been your guests to your hospitality.

ROBERT LOGSDON: I do know the business from both sides.

SENATOR JANSSEN: Any other questions? I don't see any. Thank you, Mr. Logsdon. And is there anyone who would like to speak in Mr. Logsdon's behalf?

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ROBERT LOGSDON: Thank you.

SENATOR JANSSEN: Thank you, Bob.

HOBERT RUPE: I'll be incredibly brief. My name is Hobert B. Rupe. I am the executive director of the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission. I've had the pleasure of serving with Chairman Logsdon for two years when I was at the Attorney General's Office as the prosecutor, and for the last year and a quarter...we are in third...serving as executive director of the commission. I was going to say, Senators, that Chairman Logsdon brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to this issue and would recommend that he be confirmed to another six-year term by the Legislature.

SENATOR JANSSEN: Any questions?

SENATOR LANDIS: Hoby, if Bob was not a good commissioner, would you be in here opposing him? I'll tell you why. I've got to say, you're an employee...

HOBERT RUPE: I'm an employee.

SENATOR LANDIS: ...and this is the guy who's your boss...

HOBERT RUPE: Exactly.

SENATOR LANDIS: ...and you're in here saying that your boss ought to be confirmed for his job?

HOBERT RUPE: Yes.

SENATOR LANDIS: It's a little bizarre.

HOBERT RUPE: It's a little bizarre.

SENATOR LANDIS: Are we going to see you here on other commissioners, because I've got to tell you, this is something that we don't normally see, which is a state employee--employee, coming in and saying, confirm my boss.

HOBERT RUPE: I would say this, Senator, I was unaware of the normal protocols. I was primarily making myself available as the chairman, if there were any questions, and

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would say that I believe, Senator, that Chairman Logsdon the experience that he brings from the...his background is broad and would be ready to answer any questions regarding the operations. And I was primarily...would be here not so much as a commissioner, but Mr. Logsdon has served as chairman, and therefore I would be prepared to answer any questions, at all, that the senators would have.

SENATOR LANDIS: Wouldn't that be in a neutral capacity, Hoby?

HOBERT RUPE: That would probably be more officially neutral capacity.

SENATOR LANDIS: Why the state of Nebraska's official employees would be taking a side or the other...

HOBERT RUPE: You're...

SENATOR LANDIS: ...surprises me, and I'm not sure it's particularly good policy, unless, for example, you're here in your personal capacity as a friend or confidant; that might be something different. But identifying yourself as a state employee, where he's coming to confirm and support in favor of his boss, I've got to tell you, that's strikes me as slightly odd.

HOBERT RUPE: You're absolutely right, Senator, I did not think...I did not foresee that, and I would respectfully change my position as a citizen of the state of Nebraska who has worked quite closely with the Liquor Commission and would be prepared to answer any questions regarding the chairman's position.

SENATOR JANSSEN: I think that will straighten the record out, Hoby.

HOBERT RUPE: I appreciate that.

SENATOR JANSSEN: All right.

SENATOR FRIEND: Hoby, you see now...you see why it's so difficult with Senator... No, I'm kidding; that was a joke. Ha, ha.

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HOBERT RUPE: Ha, ha. You know, Senators...

SENATOR FRIEND: It's 9:30 in the morning, folks. It's not...

SENATOR LANDIS: I think everybody is saying, yeah, it is true. It's not difficult; it's true.

SENATOR FRIEND: It's not 7:30 in the morning; it's 9:30. I would have thought that...no, I...

SENATOR LANDIS: (Laugh)

SENATOR FRIEND: Thank you. Thank you, Hoby.

HOBERT RUPE: Senator, I will say this, that this is not the first time that Senator Landis has posed me difficult questions. I remember back years ago when I was a student of Senator Landis.

SENATOR LANDIS: That's right.

SENATOR FRIEND: It's difficult for us to stay with it and that was my point. I mean...

HOBERT RUPE: Well, my theory about it is, you know, perhaps this reinforces Otto Van Bismarck's line, that there are two things that people should not see being made: laws and sausages.

SENATOR LANDIS: Um-hum.

SENATOR JANSSEN: All right, now let's not get into that. (Laughter)

SENATOR FRIEND: Now you are making it difficult.

HOBERT RUPE: Now everyone says, Senator Janssen, although I must say...

SENATOR FISCHER: I think Hobie better leave.

HOBERT RUPE: ...from a personal standpoint, Senator Janssen's sausages, are wonderful, as I have partaken of his sausages. Thank you.

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SENATOR JANSSEN: All right. I think that ends your testimony. Is there anyone else that would like to take this hot seat?

SENATOR LANDIS: Yeah, somebody can salvage this appointment.

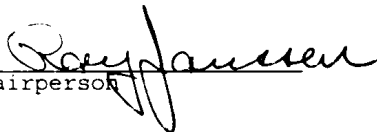
SENATOR JANSSEN: Seeing none, Commissioner Logsdon, would you like to say anything else, or are you going to leave it sit.

ROBERT LOGSDON: I just think enough has been said.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thank you, Bob.

SENATOR JANSSEN: Anyone else? Seeing none, fine. That ends the hearing on Mr. Logsdon's Liquor Control Commission.

ROBERT LOGSDON: Thank you.


Chairperson


Committee Clerk